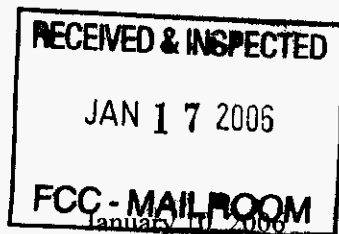


The Tri State "Like It Is" Support Coalition



P.O. Box 25511
Newark, New Jersey 07101
(973)447-0623

Original

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

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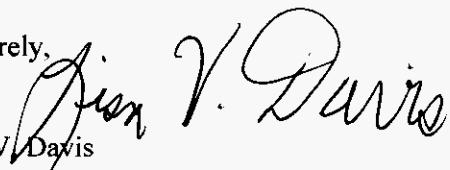
Royce Sherlock
FCC
Chief of Staff, FCC Localism Task Force
Chief, Industry Analysis Division, FCC Media Bureau
RM 2C360
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Sherlock:

As per our conference call on January 6, 2006, I am enclosing a copy of the voluminous amount of complaint letters (totalling over 1000) that we have collected from the community against WABC-TV in New York. Please note that a copy of these letters were also sent to the chair of the FCC, Kevin J. Martin.

Again, I reiterate this Coalition's demand for Localism Hearings to be held in the New York, New Jersey area pertaining to the issue of lack of diversity in the media. As I emphasized in the letter I originally sent to the FCC, although WABC-TV is specifically named in our complaints, other broadcast stations do not fare any better! In a survey that we coconducted in 2005 among Black television viewers, over 90% of those interviewed responded that they were not satisfied with how Blacks were portrayed in the media and that they wanted more serious programs that dealt with issues affecting their community. The situation at WABC-TV merely reflects a microcosm of a much larger problem, and that is broadcasters' dereliction of duty as it pertains to communities of color.

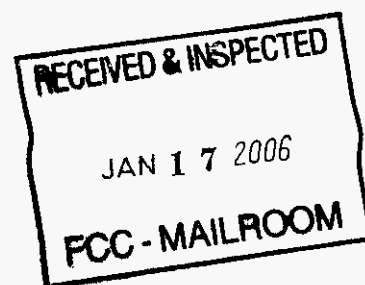
Sincerely,


Lisa V. Davis
Chairperson
Tri State "Like It Is" Support Coalition

No. of Copies rec'd
List A B C D E

041

Ross McMullin,
PRESIDENT & CEO
adidas America
PO Box 4015
Beaverton, OR 97076



re: the Preemption of ½ hour of "Like It Is" for "NBA Inside Stuff"

It has come to my attention that adidas has sponsored advertising on the show "NBA Inside Stuff."

I am alerting the sponsors of this show to an issue that could potentially negatively impact the sales of their products. WABC-TV and Disney has shown great insensitivity to its viewers of African descent by preempting one half hour of the award winning public affairs program "Like It Is," which is committed to helping society examine affairs through an authentic African American perspective, for a half hour of "NBA Inside Stuff."

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WABC-TV currently devotes less than an hour a week of 168 hours to public affairs programming that give the African perspective on issues affecting our community. My request to this network is simple. Return "Like It Is" to its original one hour programming. And with Black History Month fast approaching and as "Like It Is" always honors this month with special programming, I want the show returned to its one hour format in time for Black History Month. Surely they can find room for "NBA Inside Stuff" in another time slot.

If this is not done, I will register my displeasure with the network's offensive decision by not using the products of the sponsors of "NBA Inside Stuff." I am sure that you are perceptive enough to make the correlation that the viewers of "Like It Is" are the parents of one of your main target audiences. Black youth.

My community is organizing around this issue and will encourage others to do the same. I am sure that you do not want the negative stigma that WABC-TV has generated that basketball is more important to the Black community than our history and our socio-economic issues attached to your product. Whereas WABC-TV shows insensitivity to the needs of my community, I don't think they will be so inclined to show insensitivity to the needs of their sponsors

Rose Funches 12/22/04
Name (print) and date

Rose Funches
signature

304 AVE B
address

Bayonne, NJ 07002

cc: Dave Davis, President of WABC-TV; Anne M. Sweeney, Co-Chair Disney Media Networks

Ross McMullin,
PRESIDENT & CEO
adidas America
PO Box 4015
Beaverton, OR 97076

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SAKINA ABDUSALAM 12/23/2000
Name (print) and date

Sakina Abdusalam
signature

112 Richelieu Terr; Newark, N.J. 07106
address

cc: Dave Davis, President of WABC-TV; Anne M. Sweeney, Co-Chair Disney Media Networks

Ross McMullin.
PRESIDENT & CEO
adidas America
PO Box 4015
Beaverton, OR 97076

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Michael Owens
Name (print) and date

Michael Owens
signature

401 RTE. 22w APT. #8A
address

N. PLAINFIELD N.J. 07060

cc: Dave Davis, President of WABC-TV; Anne M. Sweeney, Co-Chair Disney Media Networks

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PRESIDENT & CEO
adidas America
PO Box 4015
Beaverton, OR 97076

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DWAN WATERS 12'22'04
Name (print) and date

[Signature]
signature

POB1188 ORANGE, NJ 07051
address

cc: Dave Davis, President of WABC-TV; Anne M. Sweeney, Co-Chair Disney Media Networks

Ross McMullin,
PRESIDENT & CEO
adidas America
PO Box 4015
Beaverton, OR 97076

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Sakeena Moore 1-6-86
Name (print) and date

Sakeena Moore
signature

3800 NE 1st St
address

cc: Dave Davis, President of WABC-TV; Anne M. Sweeney, Co-Chair Disney Media Networks

The Tri State "Like It Is" Support Coalition

P.O. Box 25511
Newark, New Jersey 07101
(973)447-0623

via fax and mail

October 21, 2005

Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Demand for Localism Hearings in the NY/NJ Tri-State area to investigate WABC-TV and its parent company, Disney, for its racist programming decisions and insensitivity to the needs of the Black community and to also investigate local broadcasters in general for their dereliction of duty as it pertains to the needs of communities of color.

Dear Mr. Martin:

The Tri State "Like It Is" Support Coalition is calling upon the FCC and congressional representatives to hold public hearings in the New York/New Jersey area to investigate WABC-TV and its parent company, Disney, for the racism and disregard that it exhibits toward the African American community. We charge that WABC-TV and Disney, as public trustees of the airwaves, are in violation of its mandate to service the needs of the communities it broadcasts to. And that includes communities of color. Out of 168 broadcast hours a week, WABC-TV in New York will not even commit to at least one hour of weekly programming for serious issues affecting the Black community. This is an outrage! In fact, WABC-TV has fought the Black community's request to provide programming that meets its needs and interests. And as there is an extreme dearth of diversity in programming with all of the stations in this area, we ask that your investigation also include local broadcasters in general in this area as it pertains to racism and the under representation of serious issues affecting communities of color.

Regarding this Coalition's complaint against WABC-TV, for years the African American community has been engaged in a protracted battle to save the longest running Black produced show in US history. This is the multi award winning public affairs program "Like It Is" with Gil Noble. The show's producer, Gil Noble, has won over 650 community awards, and numerous industry awards, including seven Emmy's for his excellence in broadcast journalism. Due to Mr Noble's 37 year commitment to covering events from an Afrocentric perspective, today "Like It Is" a national treasure among its huge fan base, as it contains one of the largest archives of programs and documentaries on the African/African American experience. Our examination of the station's public file revealed that this show generates far more letters of support, bar none, than any other show produced at WABC-TV in New York. There are literally hundreds of letters of support on file for the show, which take up several file cabinet drawers. And since these letters only date back to three years ago, one can easily imagine the volumes of viewer mail that the show has generated since its inception. These letters are a strong testament to the success and popularity of the show. In fact, judging from the viewer response, "Like It Is" is the most popular show to come out of WABC-TV in New York, as their other shows produced there doesn't generate 1/16th of the positive mail that this one does.

It would logically follow that with accolades such as these, WABC-TV and Disney would be proudly promoting "Like It Is" as one of its flagship programs and that they would be priming the show for syndication. To the contrary however, they do everything in their power to undermine the success of the show. For in spite of the show's unprecedented run, WABC-TV and Disney have on numerous occasions

tried to cancel it. But community outrage, demonstrations, boycott of advertisers, etc. convinced management otherwise. And while the show continues to air today, it is only by a mere thread. There is no continuity in the show's time format and it is continuously pre-empted. In 2003/2004 it was preempted at least 30% of the time. When it is not pre-empted entirely the station resorts to slashing its time by ½ hour. During the fall 2004 season, WABC-TV pre-empted ½ hour of "Like It Is" to air the syndicated show "NBA Inside Stuff," thus perpetuating the racist stereotype that sports is more important to the Black community than our history.

Hundreds of petition letters went to WABC and Disney calling upon the show to be immediately reinstated to its one hour format and in time for Black history month. In January of 2005 this Coalition, which consists of a broad based network of numerous community organizations, took this issue up with the head of WABC-TV, Dave Davis in Newark, NJ. At that meeting we reminded him of the station's mandated obligations to serve the interests of the community and called upon WABC-TV to immediately reinstate "Like It Is" to its one hour format in time for Black History month. Mr. Davis deliberately misrepresented the situation saying that the station was under network contract to air "NBA Inside Stuff" in the 12:30 time slot on Sundays. ("Like It Is" is slated to air from 12:00 - 1:00 on Sundays). We were able to prove that this was not true by pointing out to Mr. Davis that "NBA Inside Stuff" aired at various times on WABC-TV affiliates throughout the country. (We were also able to verify with Disney that WABC-TV in NY was not under contract to air Inside Stuff in that time slot). Another of our demands were that the station provide promotional support for the show, as it rarely, if ever, runs any promos for "Like It Is".

However, in spite of all the letters, and in spite of the meeting, the Black community was once again ignored by WABC and Disney. Needless to say none of our demands were met and "Like It Is" continued to be pre-empted for ½ hour. When the basket ball season was in full swing WABC moved "NBA Inside Stuff" to Saturdays to air the basket ball games on Sundays. When the basketball games did not present a conflict with "Like It Is" the show aired for an hour. But now that the basketball season is over and the fall 2005 season is upon us, WABC-TV has once again started airing "NBA Inside Stuff" on Sundays at 12:30 to interfere with "Like It Is." This is an outrage and warrants the FCC's immediate attention!

Understand that the situation with WABC and Disney represent only a microcosm of a much larger and disturbing picture. And that is the racist misrepresentation of people of color in the media and the denial of people of color to access to the airwaves. The coverage of the Katrina catastrophe underscored the racist biased of the media, with Black people that were fighting for their very survival being widely portrayed as looters and criminals. In 1968 the Kerner Commission excoriated the media for its perpetuation of racism in society. And today, not much has changed. In a report published in the Harvard Law Review by UCLA Law Professor Jerry Kang, entitled "Trojan Horses of Race," Kang argues states that violent crime occupy a high percentage of air time on broadcast news, especially the local news. He further states that violent crime occupies 25% of all local newscasts and that the majority of these stories disproportionately involve people of color, especially African Americans.

In a startling study conducted by Gilliam and Iyengar, called the Mugshot study, statistics showed that greater viewing of local news leads to "more old fashioned racism and more new racism." Lang's research strongly concludes that the media, with its unfair depiction of Black society, exacerbates implicit racial bias. The consequences of such an abhorrent picture are not limited to individual living rooms, but affect every aspect of our society, from making public policy to the application of the law. Considering this dismal indictment of today's media, public affairs programs such as "Like It Is" are not simply a necessity, they are a moral imperative.

And even if WABC-TV were to firmly commit to a one hour time slot for "Like It Is" this is simply not enough. When one contrasts the daily deluge of negative images broadcast about African life against the dearth of positive social messages about the Black experience, a mere sixty minutes a week does not begin to do the Black community, or other communities of color for that matter, the justice that it deserves.

We are submitting with this letter copies of over 1000 complaint letters against WABC-TV. We are also submitting the results of a survey of African Americans in this area in which over 90% of those interviewed said that they were not satisfied with how Blacks were portrayed in the media and that they wanted more serious programs that dealt with issues affecting their community.

The Tri State "Like It Is" Support coalition further asserts that the FCC deregulations enabling massive corporate media buyouts, coupled with congressional overturning of affirmative action measures offering incentives for selling licenses to people of color, have exacerbated the situation, with the result being less diversity in broadcasting, especially in the area of media ownership. The gains that various ethnic groups have made in the field of broadcast media are being reversed. According to the 2000 report from the Minority Telecommunications Development Program, after the repeal of incentives encouraging minority ownership and the implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which relaxed station ownership limits, the number of minority owned stations dropped by 28. Other data shows that the number of people of color working in television stations dropped from 24.6% in 2001 and to 18.1% in 2003. In radio the number dropped from 10.7% to 6.5%. Many minorities in the media argue that without media ownership by people of color and without diverse sources of information, various ethnic groups will remain powerless to present positive images about their communities. Although it is estimated that Blacks, Latinos, Native people, and Asians make up at least one third of this country's population (my personal belief is that the number is much higher), one culture controls 98% of the telecommunications industry. The Coalition argues that removing the barriers that preclude various ethnic populations from fully participating in the telecommunications industry must be a public mandate and we call upon the FCC and the Congress to immediately strike these barriers down.

The Tri State "Like It Is" Coalition would like to hold localism hearings on these issues around December, 2005, or January, 2006. Please advise of your schedule.

Sincerely,


Lisa V. Davis

Chairperson

Tri State "Like It Is" Support Coalition

cc: (w/o attachments)

C. Baron	NY City Council Representative
R. Christian	Christian Love Baptist Church
J. Conyers	US Congressional Representative
M. Copps	FCC Commissioner
M. Ellison	Co-Chair FCC Localism Task Force
L. Farrakhan	Nation of Islam
J. Forbes	Riverside Church, NY
L. Hamm	People's Organization for Progress
J. Jackson	Operation PUSH
M. Lloyd	Center for American Progress
J. McIntosh	Committee to End Media Offensive to African People
Z. Muhammad	New Black Panther Party
D. Payne	US Congressional Representative, NJ
C. Rangel	US Congressional Representative, NY
R. Ratcliffe	Co-Chair FCC Localism Task Force
A. Sharpton	National Action Network
K. Tabori	NJ NAACP
B. Walker	Newark City Council Representative
M. Watts	Chair of Congressional Black Caucus
ETAL	

Dave Davis
President and General Manager
WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

RETURN *LIKE IT IS* TO ITS ORIGINAL 1 HOUR FORMAT!

As a regular viewer and strong supporter of "Like It Is" I am outraged at the decision of WABC-TV to cut the format of this esteemed public service/news show to 1/2 hour, in order to expand the time allotted for sports and entertainment. How insulting!

"Like It Is," with its award winning host and producer Gil Noble, has served the American public for the past 34 years with timely and critical analysis of the political, economic and cultural issues that shape our lives. Serving the mandate of the Kerner Commission, which called upon the media to provide greater representation of people of color and the various issues and viewpoints that make up this country's ethnic diversity, "Like It Is" has offered a unique and most needed opportunity for people to examine current affairs through an African American perspective. To date it is the longest running African American produced television program in the US and has produced the largest body of programs and documentaries on Black Americans.

Today many of the gains that people of color have made in media broadcasting are being reversed. Racial diversity in media ownership and representation in the news rooms is in decline. The fact that "Like It Is" is one of the only regularly scheduled Black programs produced at WABC-TV, coupled with your station's decision to first try to eliminate the program and then to slash the time format, reflects this dangerous and disturbing trend.

Again, I call upon you to return "Like It Is" to its original hour format. I am very aware that Disney owns ABC. While I will always support this program, if this reasonable request is not granted, I will find other ways to express my displeasure via my network viewing habits and my purchasing power. And I will encourage others to do the same. There are many ways in which my community can register its displeasure pertaining to your insensitivity to the audience that "Like It Is" serves.

Signature

Address

Date

Maria Wampler
972 W. 6th St.
Lanham, MD 2063
12/24/04

Dave Davis
President and General Manager
WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

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Andrea R. Parker
Signature
538 W. 7th St #B4
Address
Plainfield, N.J.
12/21/04
Date

Dave Davis
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WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

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Signature

James E. Gwyn

Address

600 CLINTON AVE
PLFD, N.J. 07063

Date

12/21/04

Dave Davis
President and General Manager
WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

RETURN *LIKE IT IS* TO ITS ORIGINAL 1 HOUR FORMAT!

As a regular viewer and strong supporter of "Like It Is" I am outraged at the decision of WABC-TV to cut the format of this esteemed public service/news show to ½ hour, in order to expand the time allotted for sports and entertainment. How insulting!

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Signature

Address

145 Park Ave

Hairfield NJ 07060

Date

12/21/04

Dave Davis
President and General Manager
WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

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Must Bilal
901 W 4th St
Plainfield NJ
12-21-04

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Signature
510 East Palmer St
Address
RAINFIELD N.J. 07060
Dec. 21, 2004
Date

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President and General Manager
WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

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Carlton Eggleston
Signature Carlton Eggleston
Address 601 W 4th St Plainfield
N.J.
Dec, 21, 04
Date

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WABC-TV
7 Lincoln Square
New York, NY 10023

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Signature

Gloria Spence

Address

520 E front st 21

Plainfield 07060

Date

12.21.04

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Elizabeth Brown
Signature
754 Webster Place
Address
Plainfield N.J. 07060
12.21.04
Date

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Jane Lewis
Signature
1419 LenBorgas AVE
Address
NJ 07062 Plain Field
12 21 2004
Date

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Richard Tucker
Signature

1759 Cedarwood Drive
Address

Westbury, N.Y.

12-21-84
Date

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Robert Carey

Signature

732 KENSINGTON AVE

Address

PLAINFIELD N.J. 07060

December 21, 2004

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Laura J. Heerin
Signature
15 Magnolia Ave
Address
51 Plainfield N.J. 07060
2004 21 Dec
Date

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Adassa Banner

Signature

P.O. Box 5662

Address

Plainfield 07060

12-21-04

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Signature

Address

Date

James Shipley
518 WATKINS AVE.
PLAINFIELD, N.J.
12/21/04